An Essay

on

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One Thousand Eight Hundred

And Fifty Nine

Man's created nature is more helpless than any other created being. He has no congenital weapons for his defence like the bull. No speed to enable him to flee from his enemy like the deer

He has no armor impenetrable to violence like the tortoise. No place of refuge provided by nature as is possessed by all other created beings for their comfort and safety. No physical provisions to keep the enemy at bay, such as render the porcupine and torpedo formidable. No sting like the godfly nor poison fangs like the viper.

He is not protected from the action of the water by the shining hair of the seal, the close oily feathers of the duck, or the smooth shield of the water beetle

His body but a slight degree lighter than the water, floats in that medium more helpless than any quadruped, and is in danger of instant death.

At its birth the lamb knows where to seek its mother's udder, but the helpless babe would perish if its mother's breast were not presented to it.

Where mankind is born nature nowhere furnishes his food ready made, as she provides ants for the armodilla, caterpillars for the ichneumon fly, or the open petals of flowers for the bee.

Man is subject to a far larger number of diseases than animals, which are born with an instinctive knowledge of the remedial means for these invisible enemies of life, which man possesses not. Man alone painfully escapes from his mothers womb; soft, tender, naked, defenceless, helpless and destitute of all that can render his existence supportable destitute of all wherewith nature so richly endowes the worms of the dust, to render their life happy. Where is the benevolence of the Creator that could thus deny man, and him alone the comforts and necessities of this earths life?

Behold the Eternal Source of all love has only withheld these powers from man that he might be endowed all the more richly with that spark

of divinity a mind, which enables man to elicit from himself a full satisfaction of all his requirements, and a full satisfaction of all conceivable benefits, and to develope from himself the innumerable advantages that exalt the children of this earth far above every other created being.

This invaluable endowment renders man capable of creating for himself more efficient means for sustenance, protection, defence and comfort, than has been given to the most favored of all created beings. Man in order to enjoy health and long life requires food which contain nutritious but no irritating properties, and drinks which are diluent and nutritious, that contain no medicinal properties such as pure water and milk

And for accessories to stimulate the taste the only substances which have been found to be harmless and suitable for the human body, are salt, sugar and vinegar, all three in

small quantites or at all events in moderation,

All other accessaries which we term spices and all spiritous and fermented liquors have more or less medicinal properties.

The nearer they resemble medicin and the more frequently and copiously they are taken into our bodies, the more objectionable are they and the more prejudical to health and long life.

Most objectionable of all is the frequent use of purely medicinal substances of great power as articles of diet. Among the ancients, wine was the only pure medical drink, but the wise Greeks and Romans never drank it without diluting it plentifully with water.

In modern times many more pure medicinal drinks and condiments have been added to our diet or used as a luxury such as snuffing smoking and chewing tobacco, chewing hemp leaves, eating opium and agaric, drinking, gin, brandy, whiskey and several kinds

of stimulating and medicinal beers tea and coffee.

Medicinal substances do not nurish but alter the healthy condition of our organism, and any alteration of the healthy state of the organism constitutes a morbid condition called disease.

In proportion as the substances called medicines can make the healthy sick so far are they capable of removing the abnormal state dangerous to life called disease. The sole end of medicine consequently is to change the unhealthy condition of the organism to a state of health.

Used by themselves and where no disease is present they are absolutely injurious to health and the continuance of life. Their frequent use as articles of diet derrange the harmonious action of the organs, undermines health and shortens life. A wholesome medicine for a healthy condition is a contradiction of terms.

All creation is joyous and happy, and why should not man, endowed as he is with all the

finer sensibilities be happy likewise? Certainly such is his privilege. But in the choice of enjoyments and in the abuses of his enjoyment man alone transgresses the bounds of moderation.

No other animated being living in a state of freedom, partakes of any indulgences which is unsuitable for its nature and health nor consumes more than is required for its wellbeing, and drinks not after its thirst is quenched, rests itself only when it is weary, and indulges in sexual pleasures only when the period for the propagation of its species has arrived, and when its matured instinct attracts it to the delightful object of its desires. The satisfaction of our animal requirements have no other object than the preservation of our life health or species, the pleasure accompanying it is lively and great in proportion to the strength and completeness of the requirements, but in the happiest days of human beings, those who

line in conformity with nature, it assumes a shade of indifference as soon as the requirements have received the appropriate degree of satisfaction.

When we pass the boundary of moderation, as is so often the case among the higher and middle ranks of society, luxury, gluttony, and a depraved sensuality commence.

Persons in easy circumstances are apt to imagine that the excessively multiplied indulgences, in excitement of the senses of all kinds, is to live in the true sence of the word.

I have lived much says the enervated voluptuary. To me it appears that he has lived but little. To every living being only a certain amount of corporeal enjoyment has been allotted and of that amount alone can he partake without prejudice to the health. The temperate can easily discover the limit assigned to his organization, by experience unimplenced by partiality and in the observance of the

laws he has discovered, he is happy, happier than the intemperate can have any idea of.

But if seduced by bad example or by the flattering allurements of wealth, he should exceed the amount of indulgence consistent with his health, he will find that the excess is at first repugnant to his senses, then occurs satiety, disgust, for wise warnings of nature. But if he goes on undeterred, making it his business to force upon his organism more indulgences than is consistent with its wellbeing, if he employs ingenious methods, by means of stimulants of various kinds, to coax the nerves, fatigued by excess, to the reception of new and immoderate enjoyment, he will at length be enabled to indulge in debauchery that the temperate could not bear.

This is only a semblance of true enjoyment. there is no reality, no pure enjoyment.

If we seek to increase and multiply your enjoyments by unnatural means our other

senses become blunted and we derive less and less pleasure from our natural enjoyments.

By spices, condiments, and firey wines, the gormand must seek to keep the nerves of his tongue up to the mark to enable them to allow still more food to pass down his throat and at length he comes to such a state that even his highly seasoned dishes are relished no more, and he must stir up his respected (chef de cuisine) to invent something new to tickle the languid palate of his poor master, and so to overstimulate the cardiac orifice of his stomach that it shall forget its office to reject what is superfluous. If his honor has fully satisfied his apetite with the first two dishes, the omnipatent genious of his cook must follow with other dishes, which their elegant appearance their enticing odor, dissimilarity of taste and their strong seasonings, shall deceive the sister senses, and particularly the sense of taste.

This is only a vain artifice an imaginary, not a real enjoyment, accompanied by inward entire gratification, it is all vain, pitiable imagination.

The thresher of Germany regales himself with his black rye porridge, with his potatoes and salt, much more than his worshipful lord and master, over his sumptuous repast.

The former is gay and happy over his frugal fair, and sleeps soundly untill the cheerful morn wakes him refreshed and vigorous, whilst the gormand in his satiety finds the world too small, and his dull dreambeset slumbers scantily fill the long hours of the night, until he rises unrefreshed from his soft downy bed, with a confused head, foul tongue, and spasmodic yowning. Whose repast was worth the most! Which of the two had the higher, the more genuine enjoyment, the greater sensuous pleasure. The plowman on working days drinks at the spring behind the cottage

and is refreshed, whilst my lord Mayor is made hot, sleepy and stupid by the excessive quantity of his costly liquors.

In vain does the libertine imagine that the disgusting dissipations of his faculties that were created for higher objects can procure him great pleasure and real enjoyment.

Not speak of the innumerable sufferings that must result from his headstrong folly. Not to speak of how incapable he is rendering himself for future paternal joys, or of the deep lamentable furrows he is plowing in his youthful brow.

Not to mention these and many other considerations which we avoid touching upon here, he is the unhappy slave of a habit which, from the falsely dazzling inebriating goblet, confers on him far more pain than pleasure. Poor fellow! he knows not the ecstatic feelings of a rare and ardent

embrace of the faithful wife whose virtue and modesty inspire the deepest respect, and who can conjure love of the real sort in her enraptured husband. But he who has a fancy for the dregs of beastly lust, may drink to satiety in the shameless intercourse of mercenary courtesans. Soon will all his finer feelings be blunted in such degrading society;—true love, that daughter of Heaven, is to this deluded being, ridiculous absurdity.

Soon, will his sexual passions become deadened to such a degree, that in order to excite them, he must resort to a number of coarse stimulating and aphrodisiacal arts revolting to every chaste imagination.

Exhaustion of body and mind, self contempt, disgust for life, and a wretched and premature death, such are the necessary results of this distructive intemperance.

What nature presents to us should

not form the limit for the relief of our necessities; our minds should be able to enlarge her resources to an unlimited degree, for our perfect wellbeing. Thus, the Creator presents to us ears of corn and blades of wheat from the bosom of the earth, not to be chewed and swallowed in a crude and unwholesome state, but in order that we should render them useful and nutritious, by freeing them from the husks, grinding and depriving them of everything of an injurious and medicinal nature, by the fermentation and the heat of the oven, and partaking of them in the form of bread, a preparation of an innocuous and nutritious character, enabled by the perfecting powers of the mind.

Since the creation of the world, the lightning flash has destroyed men and their works, but the Author of the universe intended, that the mind of man should invent

something (which has actually been done in these latter days) whereby the fire of Heaven should be prevented from touching his dwelling, that by means of metallic rods, boldly reared aloft, should conduct it harmless to the ground.

Yea more, the mind of man should tame the thunderbolt, and teach it to read and write and carry our messages from continent to continent, with a speed that surpasses the wings of time. So the creator permits the other powers of nature to act unhindered to our harm, until we can discover something that can secure us from their distructive forces, and harmlessly avert from us, their impressions.

So, the ruler of Heaven and earth, allows the innumerable array of diseases to assail and seize upon the delicate corporeal frame, threatening it with death and distruction, well knowing that the

created power of our organism is incapable in most cases, of victoriously routing the enemy without itself suffering much loss or even succumbing in the struggle; and that the remedial resorces, of the organism, abandoned to themselves, are weak, limited and insufficient in most cases, for the dispersion of diseases.

And should not the mind employ its enobling powers where it concerns the most estimable of all earth blessings, health and life.

The Great Instructor of mankind did not intend that we should go to work in the same manner as nature. We should do more than organic nature. But not in the same manner, nor with the same means.

He did not permit us to create a horse, but we are allowed to construct machines which have more power than thousands of horses and more obedient to our will. He intended that the mind of man should invent and build railroads with

their comfortable cars, that we can with ease travel with a velocity that outstrips the most swift footed animal on earth. He also permits us to build ships, in which secure from the monsters of the deep and the fury of the tempest, and furnished with all the comforts of the mainland, we can circumnavigate the globe, which no fish can do, and therefore he denied to our body the piciue fins branchiae and floats, which are inadequate to peform that feat.

He denied our bodies the rustling wings of the mighty condor, but on the other hand he allows us to invent machines, filled with a light gas that with silent power lifts us into far higher regeons of the atmosphere than is accessible to the feathered tenants of the air. The author of all knowledge does not allow us to employ the same process of spacelus as the human organism does for itself, in order to remove a shattered limb. But their is placed in our hands the sharp quick-dividing knife that is capable of performing the operation

with less pain, less fever, and much less danger to life

He does not permit us to make use of the so-called crisis like nature, for the cure of diseases; we cannot imitate her critical sweats, her critical diuresis, her critical epistaxis. But he enables the investigater to discover remedies wherewith he may cure the diseas more rapidly than the unassisted organism is capable of doing by producing crisis. And to cure certainly, easily, and with less suffering, less danger to life and fever after sufferings, than unassisted nature can do by means of crisis &c. &c.

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